REMARKS

Further and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim 1 has been amended to correct two inadvertent errors, replacing the term "inhibitor" with --initiator--, and replacing the term "sulfate" with --sulfonate--. Support for these amendments is found in the original claims. Claim 1 has been further amended to specify that the redox polymerization initiator comprises a combination of an oxidizing agent and a reducing agent, wherein the reducing agent is an alkali metal sulfonate, ammonium sulfonate, sodium formaldehyde sulfoxylate or L-ascorbic acid. Support for this amendment is found in claims 6 and 7, which have been cancelled, as well as page 12, lines 1-4 and 13-21 of the specification.

Examiner Egwim kindly conducted a personal interview with Applicants' representative on September 16, 2004. During this interview, Applicants' representative explained that the word "inhibitor" in claim 1 was a typographical error, and as is clear from the dependent claims as well as the specification and remarks, the term should have been --initiator--. Therefore, Applicants have amended this term. The Examiner stated, as discussed on the Interview Summary Form, that this amendment would overcome the rejections under the first and second paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 112. Additionally, the Examiner stated that this amendment would likely overcome the rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Schwinum et al. Lastly, the Examiner stated that the prior art rejections would require further consideration. These rejections are discussed in detail below.

The rejections of claims 1-3 and 5-9 under the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112, as well as the rejection of claims 5-7 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112, have been rendered moot by the claim amendments.

The patentability of the present invention over the disclosures of the references relied upon by the Examiner in rejecting the claims will be apparent upon consideration of the following remarks.

The rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Schwinum et al. is respectfully traversed.

Amended claim 1 requires a redox polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt, wherein the redox polymerization initiator comprises a combination of an oxidizing agent and a reducing agent, and wherein the reducing agent is an alkali metal sulfonate, ammonium sulfonate, sodium formaldehyde sulfoxylate or L-ascorbic acid.

Schwinum et al. do not teach a redox polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt. On the contrary, Schwinum et al. teach the use of transition metal salts, specifically iron (II) sulfate. (See page 3, line 108 and page 4, line 44 of the reference).

Therefore, the invention of claims 1-3 and 5-7 is clearly patentable over Schwinum et al.

The rejection of claims 1-3 and 5-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kajiwara et al. is respectfully traversed.

As stated above, amended claim 1 requires a reducing agent which is an alkali metal sulfonate, ammonium sulfonate, sodium formaldehyde sulfoxylate or L-ascorbic acid. Kajiwara et al. do not teach Applicants' claimed reducing agents. On the contrary, Kajiwara et al. set forth two specific reducing agents, sodium bisulfite and ferrous sulfite, which differ from those claimed by Applicants. (See column 6, lines 20-21 of the reference.)

Furthermore, each of the working examples of Kajiwara et al. disclose ferrous sulfate (which is a transition metal salt and therefore excluded from the claims) as the reducing agent. (See column 14, line 27 and column 18, line 33 of the reference.) The use of a transition metal salt as the reducing agent provides unsatisfactory results. Specifically, Examples 9 and 10 of Applicants' specification, which comprise ferrous sulfate and cuprous naphthenate, respectively, demonstrate that the presence of transition metal salts have poor coloration. (See Tables 2 and 3 of Applicants' specification.) Alternatively, Applicants' Examples 1-8 and 11, wherein the redox polymerization initiator contains no transition metal salt have good coloration.

The molded products of the present invention obtained from the latex prepared by the use of a redox type polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt, wherein the reducing agent

in the polymerization initiator is one of those claimed by Applicants, are excellent in non-coloration, soft feeling and stickiness resistance, as demonstrated in Tables 2 and 3 of Applicants' specification.

Kajiwara et al. fail to teach or suggest the reducing agents of Applicants' amended claim 1. Additionally, Kajiwara et al. do not teach or suggest the advantages shown by Applicants in using a redox type polymerization initiator containing no transition metal salt.

For these reasons, the invention of claims 1-3 and 5-9 is clearly patentable over Kajiwara et al.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is submitted that each of the grounds of rejection set forth by the Examiner has been overcome, and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Upon allowance of claims 1-3 and 5-9, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the restriction requirement and allow claims 10-11. Such allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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